REMARKS

This application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office Action

dated September 23, 2004. Claims 1 to 51 are pending in the application, of which Claims

1, 10, 18, 27, 35 and 44 are in independent form. Reconsideration and further examination

are respectfully requested.

In the Office Action, Claims 1 to 51 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

over U.S. Patent No. 6,181,440 (Masuda) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,161,185 (Guthrie).

This rejection is respectfully traversed.

The present invention generally concerns the retrieval of document data, in

which a request for retrieval of document data is received from a user, with the request

including a password. The stored document data is retrieved and the document data is

output. According to one feature of the invention, a new password is automatically issued

in response to receiving from the user the request for retrieval of the document data, and

the user is notified of the new password if the user is authorized.

By virtue of the foregoing, in which a new password is automatically issued

in response to receiving from the user the request for retrieval of the document data, and

the user is notified of the new password if the user is authorized, an authorized user retains

his ability to access document data, even though the password has been changed, since he

is notified of the new password.

Referring specifically to the claims, independent Claim 1 is directed to an

apparatus for conducting a retrieval of document data including storing means for storing

the document data, a receiver, for receiving from a user a request for retrieval of the

document data, with the request including a password, and a transmitter, for transmitting

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the password, received by the receiver, to a managing unit on a network. The apparatus also includes deciding means for, when the managing unit confirms the password transmitted by the transmitter, receiving a confirmation result from the managing unit to decide, on the basis of the confirmation result, whether or not the user is an authorized user. In addition, the apparatus includes retrieving means for retrieving the document data stored in the storing means according to a decision result obtained by the deciding means, and outputting means for outputting document data retrieved by the retrieving means. The apparatus also includes issuing means for issuing a new password automatically in response to receiving from the user the request for retrieval of the document data by the receiver, wherein the user is notified of the new password if the user is authorized. In addition, the apparatus includes registering means for transmitting the new password, issued by the issuing means, to the managing unit to register the new password as a valid password.

In a similar manner, independent Claims 18 and 35 are respectively directed to a method and a record medium.

Independent Claim 10 is directed to an apparatus for conducting a retrieval of document data. The apparatus includes storing means for storing the document data, a receiver, for receiving a request for a retrieval of the document data, including a password, from a user, and confirming means for confirming authorization of the user through the use of the password which the receiver receives. The apparatus also includes retrieving means for retrieving the document data stored in the storing means on the basis of a confirmation result by the confirming means, and outputting means for outputting document data retrieved by the retrieving means. In addition, the apparatus includes issuing means for

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issuing a new password automatically in response to a receiving operation of the receiving

means, wherein the user is notified of the new password if the user is authorized. The

apparatus also includes notifying means for notifying the user of the new password issued

by the issuing means in a mode corresponding to a mode taken for when the receiver

receives the retrieval request.

In a similar manner, independent Claims 27 and 44 are respectively directed

to a method and a record medium.

The applied art is not seen to disclose or suggest the features of the present

invention. In particular, the Masuda and Guthrie patents are not seen to provide for issuing

a new password automatically in response to receiving from the user the request for

retrieval of the document data, wherein the user is notified of the new password if the user

is authorized.

Masuda discloses a facsimile apparatus, which includes a printer, a memory,

a reception unit, and a setting unit. See Masuda, Abstract; column 2, line 63 to column 3,

line 4; and Figure 1. As acknowledged in the Office Action, however, Masuda does not

disclose that a new password is automatically issued in response to receiving from the user

a request for retrieval of the document data, wherein the user is notified of the new

password if the user is authorized.

Guthrie was cited for its alleged disclosure of this claimed feature. As

understood by Applicant, Guthrie discloses a personal authentication system that utilizes a

challenge-and-response method of identification. A client generates a response to a

challenge, which is provided by a server. The response is a combined function of the

server's challenge, a serial number assigned to the client, and a Secure Authentication Data

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Base (SADB) password provided by the user. See Guthrie, Abstract. The SADB password may be automatically generated by the server, but may later be altered by the user. The SADB password must be changed after a certain time-frame, ranging from a week to several months, depending upon security policy requirements for the system. Based on the challenge value provided by the server, a different response value is created for each authentication attempt within the time-frame that the SADB password remains unchanged. See Guthrie, column 6, lines 42 to 64.

Although Guthrie teaches that the SADB password may be automatically generated, it is not seen to teach that a new SADB password is automatically issued in response to receiving from the user a request for retrieval of the document data. Rather, Guthrie sets a time-frame, such as one week to several months, for which the SADB password remains unchanged, even after multiple authentication attempts by the user. This is different than the present invention, in which a new password is automatically issued in response to receiving from the user a request for retrieval of the document data.

Moreover, Guthrie is not seen to teach that the user is notified of the new password if the user is authorized. The Office Action cites to column 7, lines 45 to 62 of Guthrie for this alleged disclosure. However, this cited portion discloses that the server transmits a challenge code to the user, rather than the SADB password. In addition, Guthrie is not seen to differentiate between authorized and unauthorized users when transmitting the challenge code to the user. As a consequence, Guthrie could not possibly describe that the user is notified of the new password if the user is authorized.
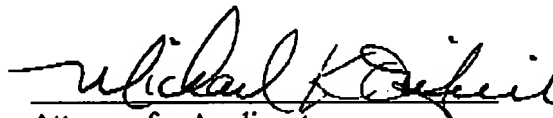
Accordingly, based on the foregoing amendments and remarks, independent Claims 1, 10, 18, 27, 35 and 44 are believed to be allowable over the applied references.

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The other claims in the application are each dependent from the independent claims and are believed to be allowable over the applied references for at least the same reasons. Because each dependent claim is deemed to define an additional aspect of the invention, however, the individual consideration of each on its own merits is respectfully requested.

No other matters being raised, it is believed that the entire application is fully in condition for allowance, and such action is courteously solicited.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our Costa Mesa, California office at (714) 540-8700. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

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